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My Dear Christian Friends and Brethren,

YOUR love to your Redeemer, your compassion for a lost world, and your bowels of mercy for your dying, perishing fellow men, often move you to call out, "Watchman, what of the night?" A dark, a long, a gloomy, a woful night has settled upon our guilty race. It envelopes all. Its issues are too expanded, too tremendous to be comprehended by finite intellect. But glory be to God in the highest and forever, that the darkness of man's fall was rapidly succeeded by the light of his recovery. From the hour the first beams of that light revealed to man the redeeming love of God, in the garden of Eden, how has every succeeding ray that has fallen upon this dark earth, cheered the heart of Christian benevolence, while every intervening cloud, obscuring the prospects of love and mercy among men, has tried, and grieved the people of God.

To the far distant heralds of Zion our hearts often seem to call, "Watchmen, what of the night?" Sometimes the reply is, "Zion travaileth and bringeth forth children, the Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad. The word has been preached, prayer has been made, the Spirit has been given, sinners have been converted." We hear the glad tidings. Our hearts leap for joy. We thank God, and take courage.

We turn again, and in other directions ask, "Watchmen, what of the night?" Their mourning hearts heave the heavy sigh; and the bitter lamentation breaks upon our ear;—"The night is prolonged; the blackness of darkness still gathers upon it. The people see no light. They continue sitting in the region and shadow of death. They stumble upon the dark mountains. Their feet go down to death, their steps take hold on hell. The Sun of righteousness does not arise to shed his vivifying light upon them. The Lord delayeth his coming to save them. The beautiful feet of those upon the mountains who bring good tidings, who publish salvation, do not come here." Heavy tidings. Who will not mourn? And is such the mournful condition of three-fourths of our race? Ah it is; it is. And do the blood redeemed followers of Jesus, who received his farewell charge, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," know that such is the mournful condition of three-

fourths of their kindred race? Ah, this they know full well! Think of this, and weep, O my soul, and be in bitterness. Oh that my head were waters and my eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for my beloved fellow-creatures, thus left to grope in darkness, and perish without hope; and for the churches too, who look on, and behold this tremendous ruin of immortal souls, sweeping over a long succession of generations, and yet make no more effort to stay its awful progress!

Beloved in the Lord, do you from Zion's most favoured mount, turn a pitying, waiting, longing eye to this dark hemisphere, and ask, "Watchmen, what of the night?" I am permitted to stand in the place of a watchman; but it is on a slender, incipient out work, very far distant from the walls of Jerusalem. O that I may always be found vigilant and faithful at my post, and ready to give a true report.

I will send you tidings. In some respects they are joyous; but in others they are grievous. I see much around me that is joyous. If I turn back no farther than to the period of my own arrival on this spot, and survey but what seems to be our own neighborhood, much that is cheering greets the eye. *Then* from Cape Comorin through the whole range of sea coast by Cochin, Goa, Bombay, Surat, Cambay, Bussora, Mocha, and by Mosambique, including Madagascar, Mauritius and other islands, to the Cape of Good Hope, there was not one Protestant missionary, if we except a native missionary who was for a short time, partially established at Surat.

But about three months ago, delegates from *five missions* met in the Bombay Mission Chapel, and formed a Missionary "*Union to promote Christian fellowship, and to consult on the best means of advancing the Kingdom of Christ in this country.*"

The individual missionary who constituted *one* of these missions, has since gone to England, not to return, and therefore, for the present, that mission is extinct. To the other four belong nine missionaries, and two European assistant missionaries. These missions have two common printing establishments, and one lithographic press, consecrated to Christ as so many powerful engines for scattering abroad the light of life. These four missions have in operation about sixty Schools, in which are more than 3,000 children reading, or daily learning to read, the word of God, and receiving catechetical instruction. The missionaries, some or all of them, are every day preaching Christ and him crucified to the heathen. The Scriptures and tracts are travelling abroad, and the word of God is working its way to immortal minds in every direction. Prayer is made, and the promises of Jehovah are laid hold on; while the means (missionaries excepted) of doing a thousand times more in similar ways for the cause of Zion here, are ready at hand. These are good things; and

we rejoice in them. You too will rejoice in them; and let us all praise the Lord for them.

But there is something in the weakness of our nature, or in the deep subtlety of our adversary, which, even while we contemplate such good things, and are praising God for them, is exceedingly liable to practice a moral mischief upon us, by so alluring and engrossing the mind with the *little* that is done or doing, as to render it seemingly blind to the almost ALL that still remains to be done. This bring us to the grievous part of the subject.

It is grievous to behold such an extent of country and so teeming with immortal souls, but yet so destitute of the messengers of life.

From Bombay we look down the coast for seventy miles, and we see two missionaries; and fourteen miles farther on we see two more. Looking in a more easterly direction, at the distance of about 300 miles, we see one missionary, chiefly occupied however as a chaplain among Europeans. In an eastern direction, the nearest missionary is about 1,000 miles from us. Looking a little to the north of east, at the distance of 1,300 miles, we see ten or twelve missionaries in little more than as many miles in length on the banks of the Ganges. Turning thence northward, at nearly the same distance from us, we see three, four, or five more separated from each other by almost as many hundred intervening miles. And looking onward beyond these distant posts, in a north east direction, through the Chinese empire and Tartary, to Kamschatka, and thence down the north western coast of America, to the river Colombia, and thence across the mountains to the Missouri, the first missionaries we see in that direction, are brethren Vail and Chapman among the Osages.

Again we look north, and at a distance of 180 miles we see two missionaries; but from thence (with two or three doubtful exceptions,) through all the North of Asia, to the pole, not a single missionary is to be seen. In a north western direction, it is doubtful whether there is now one missionary between us and St. Petersburg. Westerly, the nearest is at Jerusalem, or Beyroot.—South west, the nearest is at Sierra Leone, and more to the south, the nearest may be among the Hottentots, or on Madagascar.

Can you count the millions and millions comprised in this range? Can any but an adamant heart survey them and not be grieved?

I should like to see a new chart of the earth adjusted to a double scale of measurement, one shewing the comparative surface and the other the comparative population of the different sections of the earth—all presenting a black ground, except those spots where the gospel is *preached*. And on a slip of white ground, I would have a note of reference to Mark xvi. 15, 16; and this I would have bound up in every bible so as to face the same divine charge of Christ to his disciples. It might be recommended to all Church Members, deacons, pastors

and *teachers* of theology, to add to the note on their map Romans x. 14, 15, and Isaiah vi. 8. to the last clause; which latter clause I would have every student in theology, and young believer of good talents and education, *print* on his chart in GRAND CAPITALS; preceded by LORD WHAT WILT THOU HAVE ME TO DO?

As we must habitually set the Lord Jesus before us, or not expect his love will habitually constrain us; so must we habitually contemplate a fallen world, lying in the wicked one, or not expect that our hearts will be exercised with any proper sympathies for the perishing.

But I will take a more limited view. Here are the Mahrattas. They have been estimated at 12,000,000. To preach the gospel to these 12,000,000 of *heathen* there are now *six* missionaries, four from the Scottish Missionary Society, and two from our Society; that is, *one* missionary to 2,000,000 of souls. And to furnish these 12,000,000 with the Christian Scriptures, and tracts, and school books, there is *one small printing establishment*. It is now about *twelve* years since the mission here began, in some very small degree, to communicate the truth to some of this great multitude. Let these facts be well weighed.

Turn now to another hemisphere, and behold thirty missionaries sent to 30,000 Islanders, (I do not here vouch for precision)—that is one missionary to 1,000 heathen; and mark those missionaries labouring for *twenty* years before the Spirit is given and sinners there converted; and then say if the missionaries here should be suspected of unfaithfulness, or they and the people be viewed as under some peculiar frown of heaven, *because* the labours of *six* missionaries among 12,000,000, *or one* among 2,000,000 have not been accompanied by their conversion in *twelve* years; yea, in much *less* than that, for during a considerable part of those twelve years, there were not more than *three* missionaries among these 12,000,000, some of the time but *two*, and a part of the time *not one*. Under such circumstances, could more be reasonably expected than has been done? With such an abashing—such an appalling disparity between the magnitude of the work, and the fewness of the workmen, would not any special work of conversion, have been a stranger thing than the absence of it is?

The magnitude of this work, and the wants of these 12,000,000 of heathen, we have, from time to time, for *twelve* years, and in language as plain and urgent as we could use, expressed to our Board, and to our churches; and what attention has it received, and what have they done? Before these twelve years commenced, they had sent three missionaries to go they knew not where, but whom Providence directed to this spot. Since they began to hear the Macedonian cry from this spot in behalf of these 12,000,000 of souls, they have sent four more missionaries, one of whom has returned to the bosom of the Church in America, and two rest in the Bombay Mission burial Ground—while

but *two* of your missionaries survive to address, as your delegates under Christ, the tidings of salvation to these 12,000,000 of heathen. Yes, reverend and beloved Members of the Board, and ye most signally blessed American Churches, the fact must be *repeated*. For twelve years have we sent forth to you, the Macedonian cry in behalf of 12,000,000 of heathen souls; and often in our pleadings with you for them, have we laid them as suppliants at your feet begging from your hands the bread of life; and you have in all that time sent them but *four* missionaries—and you have *now* one *less* missionary among them than you had ten years ago; and now, while almost every operation of the mission is dragged on at a most affecting and reproaching disadvantage, we are told from the Board that they know not when they can send any more missionaries beyond the Cape of Good Hope!

Is it not doubly grievous—doubly distressing to contemplate such facts? grievous beyond expression in view of the millions perishing eternally through such neglect—and hardly *less* grievous to behold Christians, through the same neglect, so wronging their own souls and the souls of their fellow men, and so robbing their precious Saviour, of what they, in their every prayer, acknowledge to be due to him from them, and from the heathen, who are given to him?

But there is another grievous view of the subject. During those twelve years, the facilities for imparting Christian knowledge among this people, or for employing among them the appointed means of salvation, have so multiplied and improved, that I think it moderate to say that a missionary arriving here *now*, could, in an equal period, do ten times as much for the diffusion of Christian knowledge, as could have been done by one arriving here twelve years ago. Then there was no school in which to catechise and give lectures—no chapel—no Scriptures and tracts to disperse. Now we have a chapel—more than thirty school rooms—and the Scriptures and tracts for distribution—while hundreds of towns and villages, by all the eloquence and pathos that the most imperious want and the direst necessity can inspire, are supplicating for more mission school—millions of people, calling for Scriptures and tracts, and preaching—and an untold number of large towns, in population like Boston, Cambridge, Andover, Providence, Dartmouth, Williamstown, New Haven, Albany, and Schenectady, calling for missionary establishments in them. If some of these places are not quite open for the reception of missionaries, others doubtless are, and all we believe will be, by and by, while all are *now* open, in various ways, for the reception of Christian books.

Under such circumstances, with such facilities, what number of Christian books might be prepared, printed and distributed, what number of children taught to read the word of God, and catechised; and what number of perishing sinners pointed to the Saviour's cross,

in *one year*, if there were but a SUPPLY of MISSIONARIES!* Is it not a *grievous* thing to witness such facilities for missionary action, lying comparatively neglected? Is not here a vast and fertile field broken up and ready for the casting in of the seed? And is not the seed already in the field waiting for the sowers to scatter it? What should we say of the farmer, who would turn away from such a field and leave the seed in the field to perish unscattered, and go to some comparatively desolate heath, where much must be done before even *that* can be *prepared* for the seed?

Surely no one can understandingly answer the question "*where* is it best to send missionaries?" without first duly considering the comparative population of the places in question, and the comparative facilities for imparting Christian knowledge to that population. On this score, I plead that justice may be shown to these 12,000,000 of heathen. Here I ground my plea. Let the facts speak. Twelve millions of your race are prostrate at your feet. You can need no delineation of their moral character. It is enough to know that they are your *brethren*, but are HEATHEN,—that they are *idolaters* and in ignorance of their Maker and their Redeemer and that you CAN, if you WILL, send them the gospel. Their untold miseries supplicate you to open your hands, and give them that salvation which your Redeemer and your Judge has entrusted to *you* for *them*, and so long ago *charged you* to *give them*. You see also what are the facilities for *now* giving them that salvation which you have *so long* held in trust for them, but so long *withheld* from them. What will you do? Will you spurn them from your feet; and command them to let you alone, and wait, as they are, till the judgment day? Is this the love of Christ? Is this the beauty of the Lord upon his holy Zion? Where are the hundreds of students in theology? Where are the tens of hundreds of blooming, pious, well educated youth, the

* NOTE. —The following facts, from the last report of our schools, show how extensively Christian knowledge might be diffused among a rising generation of idolaters, were there only a supply of missionaries and funds; and if but the Spirit of God were given, in answer to prayer, to seal upon the youthful mind such Christian instructions, what would not soon be accomplished.

"Our number of schools at present is 32. The number of children on the teachers' lists is 1750. Of these 75 are girls, and 133 Jewish children.

"During the past year, as nearly as we can calculate, 1,000 have left our school, most of them having obtained what the natives esteem a sufficient good school education. Among these, together with those who have left in former years, are many boys and young men, who can read with a fluency and propriety that would put to shame a great majority of the common bramhuns. And the fact is peculiarly gratifying, that instead of having imbibed any prejudice against us, or our books, from the Christian instruction given in our schools, these very youth, and their relatives, wherever we meet with them in the country, are of all others the most forward to receive and read, and *beg*, the Christian Scriptures and tracts. In not a few instances, *fathers* earnestly solicit them for their little *sons*.

"During the year about 786 children have committed to memory the Ten Commandments, and 376 a Catechism of sixteen small pages. A much greater number have committed to memory parts of the same.

"We continue to have numerous and urgent applications for *additional* schools; but shall be obliged to decline them, until we are furnished with larger funds, and more fellow-labourers."

professed followers of the Lamb? Is there none among you who have a love, a sympathy, a compassion, for all these your long neglected, your dying, your perishing fellow men? O remember, there is a *dead* love, a *dead* sympathy, a *dead* compassion, as well as a *dead* faith; being without works. O, it was not a *dead* love, or sympathy, or compassion, which brought your Redeemer to the cross. That was not idle breath which he uttered, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," nor yet that interceding appeal to the Father, "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." O contemplate on the cross, your bleeding Saviour, tasting death for every man, and then survey the spiritual miseries and prospects of these millions of heathen souls dying in ignorance of that only name by which it is possible for them to be saved; and then lay upon your hearts your Redeemer's farewell charge, and when you have faithfully done this, judge of your love and regard for Jesus, and of your compassion for immortal souls, *by your works*.

But I ask again, must these eminent facilities for your diffusing among these millions the knowledge of salvation, still remain neglected at such a fearful rate? If our Board cannot send us help, is there no other Society in America that will send us help? Or must we in future turn our hopes to England only? Before missionaries can leave America—come here, and acquire the language so as to be well able to prepare Christian books, and to preach, nearly three years must elapse. But should God send death among us for the next fifteen months, as he has in the past *fifteen*, the Board would not, at the expiration of those months, have a single missionary on the ground. In such a case must the chapel and printing office be shut up, more than thirty schools dissolved, and our other operations terminated? Or into whose hands shall all this property and establishment be transferred? Do not these peculiar circumstances call for peculiar efforts?

I will endeavour, as God shall enable me, so to labour here on the spot, that the blood of these souls shall not be found in my skirts; and while I cannot but witness a generation of 12,000,000 of unevangelized souls in succession to the hundreds of generations gone down before them, dropping into eternity, leaving prospects but little better for the next generation, I will endeavour as a watchman at my post, faithfully to report what I see. Wo is unto me if I proclaim not the wants of this people—and the eminent facilities made ready for the supply of those wants. This I would wish to do so plainly and fully that if the guilt of neglecting their salvation must lodge any where, I may be able to shake it from my garments; so that I may stand acquitted before my judge, both as to my personal labours among them, and as to my pleading with you on their behalf.

The remarks I have now made, are in a great measure applicable

to other parts of India. And there is yet another very grievous view to be taken, which I can but barely mention. In little more than a year past, death, sickness, and other causes have, so far as I can learn, laid aside 19 missionaries in India, while but *six or eight* have, in the same time come to India; and so far as I know, from missionary appearances, (not from God's promises) there is a prospect of further diminution rather than of augmentation. In view of these things what will the English and American Churches do? Is it not time, for every missionary in India, to cry aloud and spare not? Would you have your missionaries leave their work, and come home, to *plead*, in person before you, the cause of the heathen? *Do not tempt* us to do so. Some have, in Providence been called home, especially to England, and their pleas, in person, have been *successful* so far beyond what has been otherwise attempted, as seemingly to call for the measure, though so expensive, and, for the time, so privative to the heathen. Why is it so? Why cannot facts be weighed? Why cannot the well known necessities and miseries of the heathen *speak*, and *plead*, and *prevail*, without the aid of any such disastrous expedients? Does this tell to the credit of those whom the gospel makes *wise to do good*? O think of these things *every one* who has a mind that *can think*! O *feel*, *every one* that has a heart that *can feel*. O ye redeemed of the Lord, whom he has made kings and priests unto God, "I beseech you, therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service," and in the true spirit of such an unreserved consecration of yourselves to your Redeemer, ask him, "LORD WHAT WILT THOU HAVE ME TO DO?" And let his Spirit, and his truth, and your own conscience give you the answer which shall guide you in a matter of such unparalleled moment. Your affectionate fellow servant in the Lord,

GORDON HALL.

Bombay, 1st February, 1826.

N. B.—I hope it will be deemed excusable to add a most respectful, but fervent request, that this plea in behalf of a population equal to that of the North American States, though so brief and feeble, may be presented to the Christian public, through the various religious Newspapers and Magazines in the United States.

[Since the above was written, this faithful servant of God, has fallen on his distant post. It would almost seem from this affecting plea with American Christians that he had some premonition of the nearness of his departure. Only a month after the date of the above, he wrote that he finished revising for the press the last sheets of the New Testament—and having thus obtained a little leisure from his labour was about starting on a tour into the country for preaching. On the 2d of March he commenced his journey, was seized with cholera morbus on the morning of the 20th, and died at a quarter past 12 on the same day. Mr. Graves is the only missionary now remaining at Bombay. *The heathen wonder that the number is not at least kept good.*]